

# South Dakota Abortion Law Infringes on Religious Freedom of Realists

Edict Date: 03-03-2006

The decision of the State of South Dakota to ban all abortions puts a substantial burden on the sincerely held beliefs of the Church of Reality that believes a woman has an absolute right to an early term abortion without any outside restrictions. The right of a woman to control her own reproduction is vital to the advancement of society which is necessary to advance the cause of exploring reality the way it really is.

This law violates several of the Sacred Principles including, but not limited to, the {In:Principle of Freedom}, {In:Principle of Privacy}, {In:Principle of Positive Evolution}, {In:Principle of Inclusiveness}, {In:Principle of Compassion}, {In:Principle of Environmentalism}, {In:Principle of Personal Responsibility} and the {In:Principle of Wisdom}. We cannot grow as a society where the government can command our women to bear children against their will. We are a fiercely independent and individualistic religion that places great sanctity on the value of personal choice which includes one of the most personal of all decisions, the decision of bearing children.

For thousands of years women have suffered persecution as second class beings and have been forced into a state of oppression based on religious doctrine. The Church of Reality takes the position that the human race will be far better off by helping women become fully equal in status as men. In order to accomplish sexual equality, women need to be empowered. We hold that the rights of women have intrinsic value and that society is diminished when women are denied the ability to make their own life decisions and to control their own destiny.

We in the Church of Reality recognize that overpopulation of the planet is a serious threat to the integrity of human civilization, and that overpopulation is worsened when women are compelled to bear children against their will. We hold that overpopulation is a threat to our environment and a threat to the stability of society. We believe that overpopulation is a threat to positive evolution and will lead to war, plagues, and famine.

We reject the notion that pregnancy is God's way of punishing teenage girls for chastity violations.

We believe that a person has the right to control their own lives and make their own choices even if those choices are considered to be clearly wrong choices. We hold that the individual has a sacred right to live the life they choose to live and to enjoy and suffer the consequences of their decisions. We hold these personal decisions to be private and not a matter that requires any justification from or explanation to society.

We take the position that a person begins their existence and has the rights of a human being at live birth. We reject that personhood and personal rights begin at conception. We in fact recognize that the two cells that make up a person are alive before conception and that conception is one of many steps necessary to produce a person. It has no more significance than any other necessary step.

We hold that the true purpose of these restrictions on abortion is the furtherance of a religious agenda that is contrary to our religious beliefs and that the members of our church should not be subject to domination by the doctrines of other religions that we don't agree with.

The State of South Dakota wants to force women who are raped to bear the children of their attacker against their will!

In particular, the South Dakota law prohibits all abortions even in cases of rape or incest. Therefore if a father rapes his daughter and impregnates her, she is forced to bear his child under the law. We in the Church of Reality finds this to be

repulsive. Not only is the rape victim who would seek an abortion criminalized, but the doctor who provided the abortion would be criminalized as well.

We find the idea of the State forcing women who are raped to bear the children of the rapist to be fundamentally opposite to our standards of right and wrong and to be both morally and religiously offensive. Our belief system requires us to be compassionate towards rape victims and to empower women by giving them the resources to end pregnancies that were caused by a violent attacker. For us to allow the State of South Dakota to deny these women abortion services is to allow government cruelty towards the female members of our church. Realists have a religious duty to protect women from state sponsored oppression.

Pursuant to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and consistent with the Supreme Court decision upholding the right to religious freedom, I Marc Perkel, as the highest authority of Church of Reality law do hereby declare and decree by edict the following:

- That the right of a woman to choose to have an abortion is an intrinsic right recognized by Church of Reality doctrine.
- That the Church of Reality finds that the South Dakota Abortion Ban is repulsive, barbaric, unethical, irresponsible, and immoral.
- That this law infringes upon our freedom of religion under the First Amendment and places a substantial burden on our sincerely held religious belief in the right of women to choose to have abortions.
- That this law is a thinly veiled attempt by other religions to exercise religious domination by using the power of the state to further their religious cause at the expense of our First Amendment right to free exercise of our religious beliefs.
- That the law criminalizes abortion providers preventing them from providing abortions services to Realists cutting off our female members' ability to legally obtain an abortion.
- That it is our position that the State of South Dakota has no compelling government interest in prohibiting abortions and therefore, pursuant to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the rights of Realists to get abortions in South Dakota take precedent over South Dakota law.

We therefore demand that the State of South Dakota make provisions in their law enforcement system to allow members of the Church of Reality to legally obtain abortions and to provide doctors and other health care professionals immunity from prosecution for providing abortion services to Realists.